placed in a steam jacketed or hot water jacketed kettle, or other suitable heating device wherein it may be subjected to the desired temperature without scorching. The kettle or other receptacle in which the cheese is treated is desirably equipped with mechanical stirrers, though stirring might be performed manually. The steam, hot water, or other source of heat, is then applied gradually to the vessel and the temperature raised until the contents of the kettle reaches approximately 175° F. at approximately which temperature it is held for a period sufficient to completely destroy the life of all bacteria, usually for approximately fifteen minutes. While the cheese is being melted and while it is held at sterilizing temperature, it is actively stirred or agitated by suitable stirrers, and this treatment results in maintaining the mixture homogeneous and from losing its true cheese character. After complete sterilization is assured, the liquid cheese is run off into suitable containers and, ordinarily, hermetically sealed under sterile conditions. After it has cooled it possesses its original flavor unimpaired, or substantially unimpaired, and its texture is homogeneous and substantially the same as it was before the treatment, excepting of course, the elimination of such cellular cavities as may have existed in the cheese. The hermetically sealing under sterilized conditions is preferably and readily accomplished by drawing off the cheese into thoroughly clean cans or jars and sealing these while the cheese still remains at a sterilizing temperature. The subsequent cooling of the contents of the containers produces a partial vacuum and causes atmospheric pressure to supplement the mechanical pressure through which the seal is effected; such vacuum sealing being well understood in the art of canning and packaging fluids.

In the use of the term "Cheddar genus" I refer to all the cheeses, however named, made by a Cheddar process. The group of so-called American cheeses are typical examples of the Cheddar genus.

I claim as my invention:

1. The improved process of rendering cheese of the Cheddar group permanently keeping, which consists in heating and melting the cheese, actively stirring it while melted, and while thus maintained in homogeneous condition raising its temperature to such degree as to effect complete sterilization and then inclosing it in protective containers under sterilized condition.

2. The improved process of rendering cheese of the Cheddar genus permanently keeping, which consists in heating it to approximately 175° F., retaining it at such raised temperature for a substantial period, agitating or stirring the cheese during the treatment with heat, and finally placing it while sterile in suitable sterilized hermetically sealed containers.

3. As a new article of manufacture, completely sterilized cheese of the Cheddar genus.

4. As a new article of manufacture, a hermetically sealed completely sterilized package of cheese of the Cheddar genus.

5. As a new article of manufacture, a hermetically sealed completely sterilized package of non-liquid homogeneous cheese of the Cheddar genus.

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